

Message Text

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21

ACTION EB-07

INFO OCT-01 ARA-06 ISO-00 AGR-05 CIAE-00 COME-00 INR-07

LAB-04 NSAE-00 SP-02 STR-04 TRSE-00 CIEP-01 FRB-03

OMB-01 /041 W

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R 201833Z JUL 76

FM AMEMBASSY MANAGUA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 643

AMEMBASSY SAN JOSE

INFO AMEMBASSY GUATEMALA

AMEMBASSY PANAMA

AMEMBASSY SAN SALVADOR

AMEMBASSY TEGUCIGALPA

C O N F I D E N T I A L MANAGUA 3432

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: EPAP, ETRD, NU

SUBJECT: FRESH MEAT EXPORTS-NICARAGUA

1. UNOFFICIAL STATISTICS OBTAINED BY THE EMBASSY FROM MIN-
AGRICULTURE CONCERNING RECENT FRESH BEEF EXPORTS TO THE UNITED
STATES INDICATE A SUDDEN SLOWING OF SHIPMENTS. THESE STATISTICS
ARE QUOTE UNOFFICIAL UNQUOTE ONLY IN THAT THEY ARE NOT CERTIFIED
BY THE MINISTRY, BUT THEY WERE OBTAINED FROM THE SAME SOURCE
THAT ISSUES THE QUOTE OFFICIAL UNQUOTE STATISTICS. THE STATISTICS
ARE AS FOLLOWS:

WEEK ENDING: SHIPMENT IN LBS.

MAY 29 1,282,558.5

JUNE 5 415,159.5

JUNE 12 464,393.0

JUNE19 105,548.0

JUNE 26 117,539.0

JULY 3 30,637.0

YEAR TO DATE SHIPMENTS: 28,870,159 LBS.

2. A POSSIBLE EXPLANATION FOR THE SUDDEN SLOWING

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OF BEEF SLAUGHTER AND EXPORTS MAY BE THE COMING

OF THE RAINY SEASON AT THE END OF MAY. CATTLE RAISERS MAY HAVE DECIDED TO LET THEIR CATTLE GAIN SOME WIEGHT IN THE RICH GREEN PASTURES BROUGHT BY THE RAINS IN ORDER TO EARN MORE PER COW BROUGHT TO THE SLAUGHTERHOUSE. IF THIS IS THE CASE, THEN WE WILL SEE A SHARP RESUMPTION OF EXPORT SHIPMENT IN THE NEAR FUTURE.

3. THE EMBASSY HAS ALSO HEARD FROM A GENERALLY RELIABLE SOURCE IN THE MINISTRY THAT NICARAGUA IS SELLING LARGE NUMBERS OF CATTLE ON THE HOOF TO COSTA RICA, WHERE THE SLAUGHTERHOUSES OFFER HIGHER PRICES. AN ENTIRELY UNSUBSTANTIATED RUMOR HAS NICARAGUA EXPORTING TO COSTA RICA THIS YEAR AS MANY AS 80,000 HEAR OF CATTLE (WITH ABOUT 300 LBS OF USEABLE MEET PER ANIMAL). SUCH EXPORTS ARE ILLEGAL, BUT THE LARGELY UNGUARDED BORDER BETWEEN NICARAGUA AND COSTA RICA HAS SEEN SUBSTANTIAL NUMBERS OF CATTLE PASS OVER IT IN THE PAST.

4. THE SUDDEN SLOWDOWN IN SHIPMENTS OF NICARAGUAN BEEF CHANGES THE QUOTA PICTURE SOMEWHAT. NICARAGUA MAY NOW NOT FILL ITS QUOTA AS EARLY AS PREVIOUSLY EXPECTED. ANY INFORMATION OR OBSERVATIONS THAT EMBASSY SAN JOSE MAY WISH TO EXPRESS REGARDING THE VERACITY OF THE RUMORS ABOUT THE SALE OF NICARAGUAN BEEF TO COSTA RICAN SLAUGHTERHOUSES WOULD BE APPRECIATED AND COULD BE USEFUL IN DETERMINING THE ORIGIN OF BEEF SHIPMENTS TO THE U.S. FROM CENTRAL AMERICA. THE EMBASSY MANAGUA WILL CONTINUE TO MONITOR THE SITUATION CLOSELY. THEBERGE

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